

FILED

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N.J. BOARD OF NURSING

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY
DIVISION OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
STATE BOARD OF NURSING

IN THE MATTER OF THE LICENSE OF	:	
	:	Administrative Action
STEPHANIE P. WILLIAMS, LPN	:	
License No. 26NP05499800	:	FINAL ORDER
	:	OF DISCIPLINE
TO PRACTICE NURSING	:	
IN THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY	:	

This matter was opened to the New Jersey State Board of Nursing (the "Board") upon receipt of information which the Board has reviewed and upon which the following findings of fact and conclusions of law are made:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Stephanie P. Williams ("Respondent") is licensed as a licensed practical nurse in the State of New Jersey and has been a licensee at all relevant times.

2. On or around May 12, 2011, Respondent completed an online biennial license renewal application which asked "Will you have completed the required continuing education credits by May 31, 2011," referring to the thirty hours of continuing education required during the June 1, 2009 - May 31, 2011 biennial period. Respondent answered "yes" and certified that answer to be true by submitting the online application.

3. On or around March 28, 2013, the Board sent Respondent a demand for a written statement under oath requesting certain information from Respondent including certificates of completion of all credits earned during the renewal period of June 1, 2009 - May 31, 2011.

4. On or around July 24, 2013, Respondent's attorney replied, and included certificates of completion of credits of continuing education completed after the biennial period of June 1, 2009 - May 31, 2011.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3, a nurse shall complete a minimum of 30 hours of continuing education per biennial period. Falsification of any information submitted on the renewal application may result in penalties and/or suspension or revocation of the license. N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(a). Additionally, a registered professional nurse or licensed practical nurse shall maintain continuing education compliance documentation for a period of four years after completion of the hours and shall submit such documentation to the Board upon request. N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3(f).

Respondent failed to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Board, that Respondent timely completed any continuing education required for the June 1, 2009 - May 31, 2011 biennial

renewal period. The proofs provided by Respondent were completed out of time after she submitted her biennial renewal. Respondent's failure to complete 30 hours of continuing education during the June 1, 2009 - May 31, 2011 biennial period constitutes a violation of N.J.A.C. 13:37-5.3, which the Board deems professional misconduct within the intendment of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(e) and also constitutes a violation or failure to comply with a regulation administered by the Board within in the intendment of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(h).

Further, the Board finds that Respondent's submission of her 2011 renewal, wherein she answered affirmatively that she had completed, or would complete, the required continuing education during the relevant time period, when she did not complete the required continuing education, constitutes the use or employment of dishonesty, deception, or misrepresentation within the intendment of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b).

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, a Provisional Order of Discipline imposing a suspension, reprimand and two hundred fifty dollar (\$250) civil penalty was entered on October 15, 2013. Copies were served upon Respondent via regular and certified mail. The Provisional Order was subject to finalization by the Board at 5:00 p.m. on the thirtieth day

following entry unless Respondent requested a modification or dismissal of the stated findings of fact and conclusions of law by setting forth in writing any and all reasons why said findings and conclusions should be modified or dismissed and submitting any and all documents or other written evidence supporting respondent's request for consideration and reasons therefor.

Respondent timely responded to the Provisional Order of Discipline and maintained that she had timely completed the required continuing education, but that a flood destroyed all the certificates. Respondent further maintained that she could not identify any of the providers of continuing education that she had utilized and therefore could not obtain any duplicate certificates. The Board's regulations require nurses to safeguard certificates of completion and provide those certificates to the Board upon the Board's request. Respondent was unable to do so and as such, was unable to prove that she had timely completed the required continuing education.

The Board reviewed Respondent's submissions and determined that further proceedings were not necessary. The Board was not persuaded that the submitted materials merited further consideration. Respondent was unable to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Board, that she had timely completed the

required continuing education for the June 1, 2009 - May 31, 2011 biennial period. Inasmuch as Respondent provided certificates of completion for thirty hours of continuing education completed in October 2013, which may applied to cure the deficiency of the June 1, 2009 - May 31, 2011 biennial period, the Board determined that suspension was no longer warranted. However, the Board determined that Respondent's failure to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Board, that she had timely completed continuing education in the June 1, 2009 - May 31, 2011 biennial renewal period warrants imposition of the two hundred and fifty dollar (\$250) civil penalty and a reprimand.

ACCORDINGLY, IT IS on this 24th day of Feb., 2014,
ORDERED that:

1. A civil penalty in the amount of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) is hereby imposed upon Respondent for failing to timely complete her continuing education requirements. Payment shall be made by certified check or money order payable to "State of New Jersey," delivered to George Hebert, Executive Director, State of Board of Nursing, P.O. Box 45010, Newark, New Jersey 07101. Payment shall be made no later than fifteen (15) days after the entry of this Final Order of Discipline. In the event

Respondent fails to make a timely payment, a certificate of debt shall be filed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:1-24 and the Board may bring such other proceedings as authorized by law.

2. Respondent is hereby reprimanded for her violation of N.J.S.A. 45:1-21(b).

3. In addition to the 30 hours of continuing education completed by Respondent in October 2013, Respondent shall ensure that she has certificates of completion demonstrating another 30 hours of continuing education for the June 1, 2011 - May 31, 2013 biennial period and another 30 hours for the June 1, 2013 - May 31, 2015 biennial period.

NEW JERSEY STATE BOARD OF NURSING

By: Patricia Murphy PhD, APRN, FAAN
Patricia Murphy, PhD, APN
Board President